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Andy Volk · 3rd

Head of Developer Ecosystem, Sub-Saharan Africa at Google
San Francisco, California, United States · 500+ connections[Contact info](#)[Message](#)[More...](#)

Google

 University of California,
Berkeley, Haas School of...

About

Andy is the Head of Ecosystem for Sub-Saharan Africa at Google.

Andy's early startup experience includes inventing and launching Live365.com in 1999, which grew exponentially after launch to become the Internet's second-largest broadcaster with over 2.7 million annual tuning hours. More recently, Andy was the VP of Apps & Developer Relations for Mxit, the groundbreaking South Africa-based mobile messaging platform and social network.

He has led a range of pioneering online products over the last 15 years, including co-creating the Media RSS / mRSS standard (popularly used as the global standard for including multimedia in RSS feeds), leading products at Yahoo! (digital music, video-on-demand, company-wide video player platform, and video search), LOYAL3 (direct-to-consumer company stock purchasing via Facebook), Kongregate (social gaming destination and community site for gamers and game developer), and Scour.com (Internet broadcasting and peer-to-peer technology).

Andy is also the founder of Downtempo, an Internet product development & strategy firm located in San Francisco, whose client projects have included work for MTV, NASA, Craigslist Foundation, SpotXchange, LACMA, and Globe.gov. In addition to these client projects, Downtempo incubated and launched its own in-house projects, including Is It Safe To Visit?, the world's first travel advisory search engine, Phone Genome, and NiceTips.

Activity

1,440 followers

[See all](#)

Highlights of African funding in YTD 2020 from the excellent Maxime Bayen... look...

Andy shared this
5 Reactions • 2 Comments



Congrats my friend, success well deserved. :)

Andy commented

Experience



Head of Ecosystem, Sub-Saharan Africa

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Emanu



Google
Oct 2013 – Present · 7 yrs 1 mo
San Francisco, California

I lead Google's Ecosystem team for Sub-Saharan Africa, with team members on the ground in Google's offices in Kenya and Nigeria. My focus is on reaching top startups and developers through scalable, high-impact programs, focused on all stages of the developer lifecycle, from developers writing their first lines of code, to entrepreneurs launching their first startups and apps, and on to the most successful developers on the African continent.

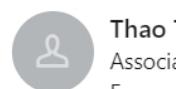
Projects my team has led includes coordinating and managing scalable developer outreach and support programs across the region (including Google Developer Groups, Google Dev...

[...see more](#)

Brice |
Associate
Emanu



Jason |
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Chicago



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Angel Investor

AngelList
Sep 2017 – Present · 3 yrs 2 mos

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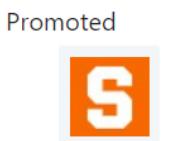
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Mentor

88mph.ac
Jan 2012 – Nov 2013 · 1 yr 11 mos
Cape Town Area, South Africa

Mentoring, brainstorming, collaborating, and occasionally arguing, with incubated startups at the 88mph (formerly Google Umbono) Cape Town-based incubator for South African startups.

Awarded "Mentor of the Year" in 2013.



VP of Apps & Developer Relations

Mxit
Mar 2012 – Sep 2013 · 1 yr 7 mos
Stellenbosch, South Africa

Leading the charge to support and expand Mxit's ecosystem of 3rd-party apps and developers running on the Mxit platform, Africa's first "super app" with an open API reaching millions of users across Africa.

[...see more](#)



VP of Product

Kongregate
Dec 2010 – Dec 2011 · 1 yr 1 mo
San Francisco, CA

As VP of Product at Kongregate, the top social game site for core gamers, I'm responsible for our online product and user experience. My duties range from managing the User Experience Design team and Product Management teams directly, leading our Agile product development process, managing our long-term product priorities, developing new product ideas and wirefram...

[...see more](#)

Founder & President

Downtempo
Jul 2007 – Dec 2010 · 3 yrs 6 mos
San Francisco, CA

Founder and president of a consulting company and incubator based in San Francisco, providing years of Silicon Valley product management, engineering leadership, and design experience to both established and emerging web and mobile companies. In other words, we take our client's ideas and evolve them into excellent products.

[...see more](#)



Chief Product Officer

LOYAL3

Jan 2009 – Jun 2009 · 6 mos
San Francisco, CA

On contract to an early stage financial services startup as their Chief Product Officer from seed through the successful closing of their Series A round.

Played key roles in managing and building product pipeline, managing onshore and offs [...see more](#)



World Traveler

Gone Living

Feb 2006 – Mar 2007 · 1 yr 2 mos
The Planet

Gone Living: an extended around-the-world trip visiting all seven continents. Spending my time living life, figuring out what is truly important, and musing on the next big thing. And blogging it all at <http://www.goneliving.com>.



Product Manager

Yahoo

Nov 2000 – Feb 2006 · 5 yrs 4 mos
Sunnyvale, CA

Product Manager leading Yahoo! Video Search from pre-launch through public release and first year of the product's lifecycle. Co-creator of the Media RSS / mRSS specification for including rich media and related metadata in RSS feeds, which is now used as a global standard.

Product Manager in charge of Yahoo!'s Streaming Audio/Video player platform and associated products (College Broadcast, SBC Video, and all video players on the Yahoo! Network), and the Yahoo! Platinum VOD product.

Product Manager leading digital music products and infrastructure for Yahoo! Music. Projects ranged from acquiring and encoding every CD in the North American catalog of recorded music, to building consumer streaming radio and music video applications, evaluating music technology acquisitions, and integrating with the LAUNCH Music acquisition.

[see less](#)



Senior Product Manager

Scour

Dec 1999 – Aug 2000 · 9 mos
Beverly Hills, CA

In charge of product management for Scour Exchange, Scour's peer-to-peer media distribution system, and myCaster, Scour's personal audio and video broadcasting system.

Invented the myCaster Video broadcasting system.



Director of Community

Live365.com

Aug 1998 – Dec 1999 · 1 yr 5 mos
Foster City, CA

Co-invented groundbreaking Live365 radio site and product (while Art Director for the company's former product, Nanocosm.com), conducted initial viral marketing efforts to build launch user base, and operated online radio station that achieved significant share of the Live365 listener base for the



Research Assistant

Human Interface Technology Lab
May 1997 – May 1998 · 1 yr 1 mo
Seattle, WA

Worked on several research projects, including the creation of 3D content to demonstrate the rendering capabilities of a new graphics chipset, and developing a distributed Virtual Reality shopping mall. Created 3D graphics in Alias Studio, wrote interaction scenarios, wrote virtual world transition interface in Java.

Show fewer experiences ^

Education



University of California, Berkeley, Haas School of Business

Certificate, Venture Capital Executive Program
2017 – 2017



University of Puget Sound

BA, English (Professional Writing / Non-linear narrative in virtual environments)
1992 – 1997
Activities and Societies: Intern, Walt Disney Imagineering (Virtual Reality theme park ride design).
Intern, Walt Disney Interactive (Software Product/Project Management)

Licenses & certifications



Certified ScrumMaster

ScrumAlliance
Issued Jun 2009 · No Expiration Date
Credential ID 000060814



Advanced Open Water Diver

PADI
Issued 2006 · No Expiration Date

Skills & Endorsements

User Experience · 63



Endorsed by Phil Barrett and 1 other who is highly skilled at this



Endorsed by 3 of Andy's colleagues at Google

Start-ups · 56



Endorsed by Kakul Srivastava and 5 others who are highly skilled at this



Endorsed by 4 of Andy's colleagues at Google

Mobile Devices · 48



Endorsed by Brett StClair and 11 others who are highly skilled at this



Endorsed by 4 of Andy's colleagues at Google

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Recommendations

[Received \(15\)](#)[Given \(10\)](#)**Phil Barrett**

Product management and

UX leader

January 6, 2014, Andy was senior
to Phil but didn't manage directly

Andy shows how product management should be done. He put his heart and soul into launching the new J2ME client at Mxit and worked the team up into a lather of enthusiasm and productivity. He gives 120% and that's on an off-day. He managed the product backlog with complete precision and insight. It was an ... [See more](#)

**Elizabeth Heathfield**Narrative and Content
Strategist and ProducerAugust 4, 2013, Elizabeth worked
with Andy but at different
companies

Andy is incredibly focused on building the tech ecosystem in Africa. He has a keen and deep understanding of its past, present, and future. He takes both the users' and developers' points of view, and has a broad yet precise understanding of mobile technology in African markets. He is a passionate believer that a risin... [See more](#)

[Show more ▾](#)

Accomplishments

6 Projects
[Africa Notes](#) • [Grrwl](#) • [Phone Genome](#) • [NiceTips](#) • [Is It Safe To Visit?](#) • [Showscout](#)
5 Patents

Method and system for providing listener-requested music over a network • Method and apparatus for organizing and playing data • RSS rendering via a media player • Syndicating multimedia information with RSS • Syndicating multiple media objects with RSS

4 Publications
[Shine On: M-KOPA Solar Home System](#) • [Sharing Your Media With Media RSS](#) • [Flash Video: Free and Easy](#)
 • [Video Compression: A Codec Primer](#)
1 Honor & Award
[Mentor of the Year](#)

Interests

**Jeff Weiner**
 Executive Chairman at LinkedIn
 10,813,696 followers
**Sequoia Capital**

261,346 followers

**SF New Tech**

1,084 members

The Pivotal Labs Network

736 members

**Google**

19,305,251 followers

**Caterina Fake**

Host at Should This Exist?, Investor at Yes ...

See all



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